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DOI:

[10.14339/STO-MP-SAS-141](https://doi.org/10.14339/STO-MP-SAS-141)

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication record in King's Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Corbett, A. S., & Binednagel-Sehovic, A. (2019). Acculturation of the Core Concepts of European Security. In *NATO Science and technology Organization* (STO-MP-SAS-141 ed.). [MP-SAS-141-12] NATO. <https://doi.org/10.14339/STO-MP-SAS-141>

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Acculturation of the Core Concepts of European Security

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ABSTRACT

Deterrence is a psychological process designed to influence the decision making of a potential adversary; it works best prior to the decision being made. Current NATO definitions of deterrence and other key terms such as resilience appear very carefully constructed but deliberately ambiguous in order to accommodate differing national interpretations of how deterrence works, and what resilience means in that context. In practice, these ambiguities in policy curtail the Alliance ability to conduct a coherent deterrence strategy, and significantly inhibit the ability to integrate all deterrence elements once a crisis has been recognised. Public use of these ambiguous definitions enables development of ostensibly coherent public policy in both deterrence and resilience, while creating serious tensions in the development and implementation of strategies for either. European NATO Allies and EU members would benefit greatly from an acknowledged, if not necessarily common, understanding of the use of key terms in their own security lexicon, or at least from a more honest acculturation of the key elements of their security strategies.

Based on research conducted with practitioners in NATO and EU, and experience gained within the NATO strategic HQ, this paper examines the understanding of deterrence in theory and practice in the Alliance, and describes an embryonic research project designed to investigate the nature of terminology in decision-making and practice, focusing on contemporary acculturation of key terms such as deterrence and resilience in the reactions to the activities of a newly assertive Russia across Europe's Eastern borders from the Mediterranean to the High North.

Differences in understanding of deterrence appear to have become manifest in an Alliance inability to adapt strategy to the re-emerging salience of deterrence as a policy issue in the European security environment after the Russian annexation of Crimea. The Alliance should address this shortcoming in order to enhance its strategic messaging of resolve and resilience quietly and consistently to deter an increasingly assertive Russia. Early outcomes from this project suggest that this does not require escalatory brinkmanship with Russia, simply a more considered and coherent linkage between the various terms used in deterrence policy and strategies available to the Alliance leadership.

Introduction

Language matters. At its most fundamental, Deterrence is a psychological process designed to influence the decision-making of a potential adversary. It therefore relies on communication in all its forms. The terminology used in NATO summit communiqués, and in all Alliance publications, is painstakingly wrought, often with extensive negotiation in order to reflect nuances acceptable to each Ally. It is the core argument of this paper that due to tacitly accepted nationally acculturated nuances reflected and folded into

deliberate ambiguity in key policy terminology, there is a disconnect between Alliance political statements, and Alliance, and National strategic plans, the latter of which should be derived from, or at least coherent with, the former. Succinctly stated, this paper illustrates a gap between articulated and accepted Alliance policy, and how it is interpreted, translated, or acculturated, both Alliance-wide and at the level of National strategy.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, it considers the evidence supporting this thesis by comparing shifts in the language in the political statements on ‘Deterrence’ at the five NATO Summits since Lisbon in 2010, against the evolution of key Alliance doctrine; the “fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.”¹ The very language of the doctrine, “requires judgement in application” hints at the possibility of multiple interpretation of “actions” as well as of “objectives.” The choice of the term ‘Deterrence’ reflects the paper’s hypothesis of a historic as well as interpretive break between a culture of deterrence as a vestige of the Cold War, which gives rise to the gap between Alliance strategic doctrine and Alliance policy, further fragmented at the Nations’ level.

Focusing on the break between NATO policy and NATO doctrine, the hypothesis states that there is no clear link between evolving policy statements and development of associated doctrine in key areas such as deterrence and resilience. This paper suggests that development of strategy and doctrine at NATO headquarters suffers from a disconnect between agreed-upon, but ambiguous, policy statements, and precise and doctrinal direction necessary to guide action, a significant ‘gap’. This gap also appears evident between Alliance and ensuing national strategic plans, because of the nuances left un-acculturated at the international or Alliance-wide policy level.

Following the initial discourse analysis tracing the linguistic shifts on deterrence and resilience at the Alliance levels, in order to test this second hypothesis, the second part of the paper describes a proposed research programme to chart the course of a hypothesized evolution in the ‘cultures of security’ between the Alliance and National states. The programme envisions a series of workshops testing national articulation and acculturation of assumptions and nuanced interpretations of key security terms, including deterrence and resilience, as well as health security, to capture the breadth and depth of the security discourse. Health security is included because it straddles doctrinal and policy illustrating the roles of articulation and acculturation of cultures of security as these pertain to Alliance and national strategy of defence and deterrence, particularly in the context of the ongoing migration debates. Nonetheless, the principal argument of this paper relies on the concepts of ‘deterrence’ to illustrate the ‘gap’. Additional terms will be proposed and distilled from the discussions as the research programme is developed and progresses.

The Gap Analysis

The NATO Strategic Concept is the highest level operating doctrine for the Alliance and is regularly cited in discussions at all levels within the Alliance. The current ‘2010 Strategic Concept; Active Engagement, Modern Defence’ was published at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010. The previous 1999 Strategic Concept listed ‘Security’, ‘Consultation’ and ‘Deterrence and Defence’ as the three fundamental security tasks of the Alliance, with ‘Crisis Management’ and ‘Partnership’ as subordinate tasks to ‘enhance the

¹ NATO Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-01(E), *Allied Joint Doctrine* 28 Feb 2017 Lexicon p-9

security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area.² This language clearly prioritizes territorial and political integrity and defence.

Prior to the Lisbon Summit, the 1999 Strategic Concept was enhanced with the 2009 Declaration on Alliance Security which had been agreed to at the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit. It stated;

Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and collective defence, based on the indivisibility of Allied security, are, and will remain, the cornerstone of our Alliance. Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy.³

This paved the way towards the language of the 2010 Strategic Concept which described the Alliance's three core tasks as; 'Collective defence ... (NATO will deter and defend against any threats of aggression)... Crisis management ... [and] Cooperative security.'⁴ It also stated that the "Euro-Atlantic area is at peace ..."⁵ and;

Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy. The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote. (paragraph 17)

This does not 'feel' like a substantial change to the tenor of the 1999 Strategic Concept, and seems to be compliant with the intent of the 2009 Declaration on Security, but the exact terms used were, nevertheless, the subject of extensive debate due to different interpretations of the role of nuclear weapons in the Alliance deterrence posture.⁶ This led to the agreement at Lisbon to work towards a 'Deterrence and Defence Posture Review' to be rolled out at the Chicago Summit in 2012. It concluded that 'NATO is committed to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities for deterrence and defence to fulfil its commitments as set out in the Strategic Concept.'⁷ In addition, the elevation of 'crisis management' and 'cooperative security' suggest a slightly broader focus beyond the territorial space of Alliance Members and into and onto potential destabilizers further afield. The allusions here may foretell the 2018 focus not only on further deterrence but also on resilience.

Strategic Level Language

Draft political statements, and strategic policy documents such as the Strategic Concept, are drafted in the Brussels HQ in political committees, usually by the Defence Policy and Planning Committee. The Military Committee, and the two Strategic Commanders, Allied Command Operations (ACO), and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) are each represented on these committees. The initial text is usually produced by the International Staff (permanent NATO Civil Service) with input from Allies, and this draft forms the basis of discussions between the Allies in committee until consensus is reached. The agreed draft then forms the basis of Summit Communiqués or policy documents.

² NATO 1999 Strategic Concept para 10

³ Declaration on Alliance Security (2009)

⁴ NATO 2010 Strategic Concept para 4

⁵ NATO 2010 Strategic Concept para 7

⁶ KAMP, K. H. 2010. NATO's Nuclear Weapons in Europe: beyond "Yes" or "No". In: LARSEN, J. (ed.) *NATO Defence College Research Paper*. Rome: NATO Defence College. P2

⁷ NATO 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review paragraph 32

Alliance military doctrine is produced by the NATO Standardisation Office. The initial drafts are produced by members of the NATO International Military Staff (IMS) with extensive coordination with the two Strategic Commands. The IMS also tend to socialise key elements of the drafts with their International Staff peers to ensure policy compliance. Nations are involved to a greater or lesser degree throughout the editing process and each document is published only once it has been endorsed by each Nation in the appropriate Military Committee Working Group.

It is beyond the remit of this paper to reference classified Alliance documents. However, given the increased political focus on deterrence as one of the core operating concepts for the Alliance deterrence and defence posture, it would be reasonable to expect the (unclassified) higher level operating doctrine of the Alliance to reflect such a shift in political emphasis.

Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-01(E), Allied Joint Doctrine is the capstone NATO doctrine for Allied joint operations. It explains the strategic context for such operations and focuses on the underlying philosophy and fundamentals of joint operations.⁸

Making that strategic context coherent relies upon language. The Lexicon to AJP-01(E) includes nine pages of expressions that are all described as 'NATO Term - NATO Agreed'. They include conceptual terms such as 'strategic level', but neither 'Deterrence' nor 'Resilience' are defined in AJP-01, leaving these open to interpretation and nuance.

The 2010 iteration of AJP-01 contained an extended analysis of the Strategic Context and the military implications; it considered the role and exploitation of deterrence in cooperation, confrontation and conflict:

Even before conflict arises, demonstrable military capability and measured power projection will contribute to deterrence (to dissuade would-be aggressors from acting against the interests of any Alliance member). Faced with either an imminent crisis or a more gradual deterioration in relations within or between states, NATO forces may be required to prevent further deterioration in security towards armed conflict. Deterrence may be supplemented or replaced by more assertive coercion and conflict prevention activities, such as focused military intervention. During periods of cooperation and confrontation, the focus is likely to be on deterrence and coercion; once conflict develops however, emphasis shifts to compellence by the application of force.⁹

This was the most detailed guidance on deterrence that unclassified 2010 Alliance doctrine provided. In this iteration, it is clear that 'deterrence' is conceived as a proactive activity, designed to dissuade would be aggressors 'even before conflict arises' and involves 'demonstrable military activity and measured power projection...'. The subsequent 2011 AJP 03(B) Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations¹⁰ provides no further guidance, and does not mention the concept of deterrence at all.

⁸ Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-01(E), Allied Joint Doctrine 28 Feb 2017 page ix

⁹ Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-01(D), *Allied Joint Doctrine* 21 Dec 2010 article 0233

¹⁰ Allied Joint Publication (AJP)-03(B) *Allied Joint Doctrine for the Conduct of Operations* 16 Mar 2011

Operational Level Language

The highest level operational doctrine that mentions deterrence identified by this study is the 2016 AJP-3.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations. In describing the characteristics of Land Forces, it states; “Land forces contribute greatly to the deterrent effect of the joint force. The delivery of deterrent effects is the responsibility of the joint force. It will often be the land force, through its ability to maintain a presence in the proximity of a target audience that will maintain the effect.”¹¹ The Doctrine does not elaborate further on the deterrent effect of Land Operations, nor does it clarify such a force’s objectives. It does, however, define deterrence in its lexicon: ‘deterrence: The convincing of a potential aggressor that the consequences of coercion or armed conflict would outweigh the potential gains. This requires the maintenance of a credible military capability and strategy with the clear political will to act (NTMS - NATO Agreed).’¹²

Crucial to this debate about deterrence based on a vague definition is the understanding of the nature and means of nuclear deterrence.

Some commentators conclude that there was a lack of consensus at the political level as to the role of nuclear weapons in NATO’s deterrence and defence posture, and that the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) succeeded only in providing the external appearance of consensus, while ‘papering over the cracks.’¹³

Certainly, the DDPR did not provide in-depth guidance to Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) on deterrence strategy or further clarification on the role of the force elements (conventional, nuclear and missile defence). It declared that the “Allies’ goal is to bolster deterrence as a core element of our collective defence and contribute to the indivisible security of the Alliance (para 2).” It went on “NATO is committed to maintaining an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities for deterrence and defence...” (para 32). This closely reflects the ‘appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces’ of the 2010 Strategic Concept para 19. And in DDPR para 34: ‘NATO will continue to adjust its strategy, including with respect to the capabilities and other measures required for deterrence and defence, in line with trends in the security environment.’

In 2012, there was tenuous consensus at the policy level on the interpretation of deterrence, threatened by fundamental differences between Allies on the role of nuclear weapons in the Alliance deterrence posture. At the strategy level however, there was clear guidance from AJP-01 (which predated the DDPR) just what deterrence entailed. At the time, the Alliance Strategic Concept envisaged peaceful coexistence in the Euro-Atlantic region and potential strategic partnership with Russia. In short, there was little perceived threat for which deterrence needed to be sustained.

A simple discourse analysis would suggest that deterrence is becoming more significant in NATO policy statements since 2014. Clearly there are different contexts in which the term ‘deterrence’ is used. They include to describe nuclear deterrence, or to contextualise other States’ deterrence activities. In the 2010

¹¹ AJP-3.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations Ed A v1 Mar 16 art 0135.g

¹² AJP-3.2 Allied Joint Doctrine for Land Operations Ed A v1 Mar 16 Lexicon

¹³ KAMP, K. H. 2012. NATO’s New Nuclear Consensus. In: CHALMERS, M. (ed.) *A Problem Deferred? NATO’s Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons after Chicago*. London: Royal United Services Institute, CHALMERS, M. & BERGER, A. Ibid. *A Problem Deferred? NATO’s Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons after Chicago*. In: CHALMERS, M. & BERGER, A. (eds.) 4-12 ed.: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, TERTRAIS, B. Ibid. *Beyond Nuclear Weapons? NATO and Strategic Deterrence by 2020*. In: CHALMERS, M. (ed.). Royal United Services Institute.

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summit communique, 'deterrence' figured five times, four times in 2012, eight times in 2014, and twenty-eight times in both 2016 and 2018, although not in precisely the same phrases.

The 2014 Summit in Wales was overshadowed by the Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion of Ukraine and much of the communique was targeted at (re)assurance of Allies:

The [Readiness Action Plan] assurance measures include continuous air, land, and maritime presence and meaningful military activity in the eastern part of the Alliance, both on a rotational basis. They will provide the fundamental baseline requirement for assurance and deterrence, and are flexible and scalable in response to the evolving security situation. ... We will also establish an appropriate command and control presence and some in-place force enablers on the territories of eastern Allies ... they will also facilitate reinforcement of Allies located at NATO's periphery for deterrence and collective defence.¹⁴

The difference in deterrence and defence as it pertains to these deployments, facilities and enablers is not explained. Nuclear deterrence is treated as a discrete element in paragraphs 49-52 using terminology essentially unchanged from the 2012 communique and DDPR. The unclassified high level doctrine was not amended to reflect these changes in force posture and deterrence and defence policy, although a number of classified Contingency Operations Plans were rapidly developed to implement the Readiness Action Plan.

By 2016, the status quo in Crimea appeared to have become the new norm, recognised by the OSCE Minsk Protocols of Sept 14 and Feb 15. The focus of the 2016 Warsaw summit shifted from assurance of Allies to deterrence of further Russian aggression. The Warsaw communique mentioned deterrence 28 times, and employed more robust language than its predecessor;

NATO has responded to this changed security environment by enhancing its deterrence and defence posture, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance, and by suspending all practical civilian and military cooperation between NATO and Russia, while remaining open to political dialogue with Russia.¹⁵

Reflecting tensions within the Alliance, it also stated; "We are adapting our defence and deterrence posture to respond to threats and challenges, including from the south."¹⁶ However, in a clearly defined and articulated statement (at the policy level), the Alliance stated;

Deterrence and defence are at the heart of the Alliance's mission and purpose ... We will ensure that NATO has the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against potential adversaries and the full spectrum of threats that could confront the Alliance from any direction. ... All of the actions that we have taken to strengthen our deterrence and defence posture require appropriate investment in capabilities and the development of highly-capable and deployable forces.¹⁷

The communique continued;

¹⁴ NATO 2014 Newport Summit Communique para 7/8

¹⁵ NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit Communique para 11

¹⁶ NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit Communique para 26

¹⁷ NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit Communique para 32 & 33

... we have decided to further strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. Building on the success of the Readiness Action Plan, today we are adopting a broad approach to deterrence and defence which draws upon all of the tools at NATO's disposal. This will provide the Alliance with a range of options to be able to respond to any threats from wherever they arise. Given the different nature, types and origins of threats, we will tailor our response to specific circumstances ... As a means to prevent conflict and war, credible deterrence and defence is essential. At the same time, as part of the Alliance's overall approach to providing security for NATO populations and territory, deterrence has to be complemented by meaningful dialogue and engagement with Russia, to seek reciprocal transparency and risk reduction. Those efforts will not come at the expense of ensuring NATO's credible deterrence and defence.¹⁸

Nuclear deterrence was again dealt with in a separate part of the communiqué (para 52-55), in terms unchanged from the previous communiqués. AJP-01 Allied Joint Doctrine, the highest level doctrine which should implement these changes, was updated in February 2017, nearly eight months after the Warsaw summit, yet far from considering how deterrence would be exercised in this new strategic security environment, the updated version deleted all mention of the term. Nor were the subordinate doctrine publications amended to reflect this increased focus on deterrence capabilities.¹⁹

In 2018 the Alliance declared: “We continue to respond to the deteriorated security environment by enhancing our deterrence and defence posture, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance.”²⁰ The communiqué also included reference to the “...fight against terrorism [is] an integral part of the Alliance’s 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence and projecting stability; as such, it contributes to all three core tasks: collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security.”²¹ This inclusion reflects the demands of some allies that the Alliance should not be focused on the return of geopolitical threats. For some, the fight against terrorism is an element of the deterrence profile. It is not for others.

While we have placed renewed emphasis on deterrence and collective defence, we have also ensured that NATO retains its ability to project stability and fight against terrorism. ... As we continue to ensure that the Alliance’s deterrence and defence posture remains credible, coherent, and resilient, and that the Alliance can continue to safeguard the freedom and security of all Allies, it is of strategic importance to increase responsiveness, heighten readiness, and improve reinforcement. We will continue to assess the relevant military elements of the Alliance’s strengthened deterrence and defence posture to ensure its effectiveness.²²

¹⁸ NATO 2016 Warsaw Summit Communiqué para 38 & 39

¹⁹ AJP-3.3(B) Allied Joint Doctrine for Air and Space Operations Ed B ver 1 Apr 16; article 2 asserts that; ‘... the unique attributes of air and space power offer politicians and commanders the means to create a wide range of effects including contributing to engagement, deterrence and coercion activity at the tactical, operational and strategic levels.’ It does not say how, nor are deterrence or deterrent effects defined. AJP-3.9 Allied Joint Doctrine for Joint Targeting Edition A Version 1 Apr 16 (no mention of deterrence or deterrent); AJP-3.10.1 Allied Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations Ed B v1 Sept 14 (no mention of deterrence or deterrent); AJP-3.8 Allied Joint Doctrine for Chemical, Biological, radiological and Nuclear Defence Edition A ver 1 Mar 12 – remains extant with no reference to deterrence.

²⁰ NATO 2018 Brussels Summit Communiqué para 5

²¹ NATO 2018 Brussels Summit Communiqué para 10-12

²² NATO 2018 Brussels Summit Communiqué para 12

The communique highlights changes in a number of areas as part of the maintenance of the Alliance deterrence and defence posture in all domains. These include; an enhanced readiness initiative, the NATO Readiness Initiative (para 14), viable military reinforcement capabilities (para 15), maritime situational awareness (para 19), an overarching NATO space policy (para 19), cyber capabilities (para 20), tailored forward presence in the Black Sea (para 26), and; defence capacity building and partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa (para 50 and 55). Deterrence appears to be the core capability in the Alliance today.

However, while virtually every Alliance military asset can be claimed to contribute to deterrence, there does appear to be a shortfall in the link between the political aspirations of the 2018 communique, and the doctrine, the ‘fundamental principles by which the military forces guide their actions in support of objectives.’ There is no new doctrine which aligns these disparate capabilities with that most subtle of objectives, deterrence, nor does it appear that there are changes to existing doctrine in print in the short term.

There are also political tensions evident in the communique; “In cases of hybrid warfare, the Council could decide to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, as in the case of armed attack. We are enhancing our resilience, improving our situational awareness, and strengthening our deterrence and defence posture.”²³ “The Council could decide to invoke Article 5” is hardly language to convey implacable resolve. Similarly, since 1991, Alliance references to nuclear deterrence capabilities have remained completely discrete from all other capabilities. Obviously nuclear weapons are qualitatively different from conventional weapons, and there is no question of returning to the nuclear war-fighting scenarios of the Cold war, but in terms of deterrence, an inability to articulate an Alliance nuclear deterrence posture in public suggests a lack of coherence which undermines the very credibility on which deterrence depends.

Whilst it is easy to assert that capabilities alone can deter, modern deterrence thinking tends to focus on a triumvirate of capability, communication and credibility. To be credible in the mind of a potential aggressor, a deterrent posture must contain capable forces (NATO has no peer in capability, in theory); the capability and willingness to resort to force must be communicated to the adversary, and it must be done so in a coherent manner such that the overall impression is one of credible and implacable resolve.

Although the Alliance may boast about its military capabilities at the political level, without Alliance-wide doctrine to operate these disparate functions, the overall effect of the military capability is significantly reduced, not only in conflict, but in the credibility of the threat that it poses to a potential adversary. An inability to agree strategic doctrine suggests inhibitions on the ability to operate jointly effectively, and also a lack of genuine political cohesion to derive the specific instructions to inform that strategy. In terms of deterrence, this is the more important. Beneath the paper, the cracks are too deep. The deterrence experts in the Alliance know this, yet NATO appears unable to produce coherent strategic doctrine that reflects the current political emphasis on deterrence as the core Alliance mission.

The Research Programme

The gap analysis above introduced the issue – articulation of ambiguity - in the divergent language in NATO Alliance and National policy and doctrine. This section describes the concepts of acculturation and outlines the proposed research program.

Acculturation assumes a clear articulation of language and concepts, which Argument One noted is lacking in the translation of Alliance doctrine to policy. While this clarity facilitates nuanced interpretations of both

²³ NATO 2018 Brussels Summit Communique para 21

doctrine and policy, politically vital in an organization of 29 distinct national members, it is a hindrance to collective policy action. More to the point here, such lack of clear articulation impedes a commonly acculturated culture of security, wherein words and meanings attributed to them, such as deterrence and resilience do not but need to be understood in a (more) similar vein. It is the job of acculturation to facilitate such common understandings in order to enhance the implementation of Alliance doctrine and policies at the Alliance but also – arguably more importantly – at the National levels.

The role of acculturation is most clearly expressed when compared with intra- and extra-Alliance articulation of doctrine. Whereas intra-Alliance understanding with regard to its inclusions or expansion rests on an interpretation of doctrine favouring self-determination in ascension, extra-Alliance understandings, notably on the part of Russia, read in the text an (aggressive) stance towards incorporation or expansion. While this particular schism is related to extra-Alliance articulation, it points to the challenge of necessary acculturation of core concepts within the Alliance without which a common idea or posture is impossible.

Acculturation is not Strategic Culture

The process of acculturation is not to be conflated with ‘strategic culture.’ Strategic culture rests upon a historic and psychological process that delineates the bounds within which security can be thought and integrated into policy.²⁴ This is evidenced in the different strategic cultures of, for example, the U.S. and Germany. Whereas the strategic culture in the U.S. by and large allows for the conception of preventive and thus aggressive security interventions, that of Germany (explicitly) prohibits both.

Acculturation would mean that these two irreconcilable points, within for instance Alliance doctrine, become reconciled. Of course, each of these shifts would also imply a change in the strategic culture of the U.S. and Germany, with implications for Alliance doctrines and policies regarding deterrence and resilience. In that sense, acculturation and strategic culture are intertwined – but not identical.

A first steps towards any such change in strategic culture is therefore a) the clear articulation of core ideas; and b) their acculturation at the Alliance and National levels. It is worth nothing that there is substantial confusion over the term deterrence, pertaining to the psychological and practical (non-) use of especially nuclear weapons. As the strategic culture around discourses of possible use of such weapons undergoes a radical reconfiguration, it becomes imperative that the Alliance articulate and acculturate its position among its Member States. Furthermore, the NATO definition of resilience is not only different, but mutually exclusive to the EU definition, despite 22 states being members of both organizations. Given that the most likely area and arena of activity for both NATO and the EU remains continental Europe, clarifying and finding consensus on these ideas and their applicability is of paramount importance. Finally, currently, the concept of resilience as an element of deterrence, and its relations to additional areas pertinent to defence and security such as health is simply not considered.

NATO Allies and EU Members States, as well as the U.S. and the U.K., among others, would benefit greatly first from an articulated and commonly acknowledged definition of key terms. Second, even if they do not reach a common understanding of the terms of use of these key terms, they should arrive at a position wherein at the policy and programmatic level they are aware of and can act according to their knowledge of

²⁴ Risse, Thomas (2007). *Deutsche Identität und Außenpolitik*. In *Handbuch zur deutschen Außenpolitik*, eds. Siegmund Schmidt, Gunther Hellmann, and Reinhard Wolf. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften | GWV Fachverlage GmbH, Wiesbaden; and Techau in Schnaubelt, Christopher M. 2011 “Towards a Comprehensive Approach: Strategic and Operational Challenges”, NATO Defense College. Rome.

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their differences. In addition to the intra-Alliance benefits, such an exercise is of increasing pertinence as the Alliance shifts some of its focus to (external) crisis management and cooperation.

Articulation and acculturation aim to identify what is and how it is to be secured, primarily through deterrence and resilience. It should lead to a (common) culture of security. By contrast, strategic culture presumes the parameters within which security is pre-defined and pre-emptively to be guarded. This distinction hints at the core of the issue explored here, namely, whether the nuanced uses of terms, such as deterrence and resilience, reflect a similar, or not culture of security across NATO Alliance national debates. If the terms refer to similar ideas, then the Alliance has a common culture of security which can then feed into its strategic culture. If not, as this paper hypothesises, then there is a cacophony of ideas which need to be harmonised in order to create a strategic culture of common security.

In order to tease out the nuances pertinent to the articulation and acculturation of key Alliance doctrine and policy related to deterrence and resilience, this paper proposes the following applied research program:

At this stage, the research design is experimental and the evolution of the second stage is contingent on the outcome of the first stage. The research will be focused on two series of workshops. The first series will involve four workshops, with each workshop focused on one of the key ambiguous terms. These will consider; deterrence, resilience, cyber security and health security. These issues have been selected as the lead elements because they were identified as salient during the two exploratory workshops held in April and September 2018.

Each workshop will comprise two hour sessions led by an academic subject matter expert who will introduce the ambiguity in the subject matter through a short impulse introduction. The participants will be national delegates to the EU and NATO (as the primary sources of European security policies). The workshops will take place in Brussels to reduce travel costs and time to delegates and to enhance the attractiveness of participation for national delegations.

The sessions will be conducted under Chatham House rules and delegates will be encouraged to discuss the terms conceptually, without the constraint of national policy positions. The sessions will not be recorded (in order to aid this open exchange) although the researchers will take notes of the sessions without attribution of remarks to individuals.

The immediate output for each session is twofold – the primary purpose is to inform further understanding of the current state of discourses of cultures of security. This will result in an aggregate analysis in the form of a co-authored paper produced at the end of the first stage of the project and based on qualitative analysis of the sessions, but without attributing any specific comments to any participant or particular session. This paper will form the basis for the second stage of the research.

The second output pending each session is to achieve immediate impact by influencing policy development directly through improvement of the discourse around key security terms in common use in both EU and NATO. (Hence the involvement of the staff officers directly involved in the discussions that formulate policy). This will be done through networking and acculturation of elements of this security discourse. In essence, this will generate a bottom-up evolution of understanding of key terms of the security lexicon. If the sessions are considered valuable by participants, the project might be adapted to conduct further iterations

involving national Principals (senior staff) or Institution (NATO and EU) personnel subsequently.

These sessions will provide a good trial for the utility of the concept. Analysis from these workshops will inform a second series of workshops which will examine the impact on implementation of strategies derived from policies based on the ambiguous terms discussed. These sessions will be fine-tuned based on feedback from the first series, and will aim to include participation from the NATO and EU executive departments, national delegates and NGO and other stakeholders as appropriate. A preliminary overview of existing studies alongside the outcomes of the exploratory workshops leading to this proposed programme suggest 'headline' strategies that appear relevant include NATO deterrence and defence strategies announced at the 2018 Brussels Summit, the EU Permanent Structured Cooperation project (PESCO), the European Intervention Initiative (EII), and the Germany inspired Marshall Plan with Africa (2017), as well as the 2016 EU Global Strategy (a shift from the 2003 European Security Strategy).

This second series of workshop sessions are likely to be less informal than the first, with national positions informing delegates interventions more overtly. But drawing on the informal discussions from the first round, a genuinely informed and critical analysis of the strategies, their feasible implementation, and their possible impact is more viable than in any other format.

The workshops aim to tease out these distinctions first by identifying terms and their meanings, and second, by analysing the presence of those terms across programs and policies. This workshop programme is designed to provide a suitable research vehicle to provide the data that will test or substantiate the interim conclusions below, while at the same time enhance participants' understanding of the context in which these key security terms are evolving.

Based on research conducted with practitioners in NATO and EU, and experience gained within the NATO strategic HQ, this paper has examined the understanding of deterrence in theory and practice in the Alliance, and the nature of decision-making and practice. It has focused on reactions to activities of a newly assertive Russia across Europe's Eastern borders from the Mediterranean to the High North, as well as non-traditional crises such as the destabilization from cyber-attacks, migrant waves and pandemic outbreaks.

Its initial analysis suggests significant differences in understanding of deterrence have become manifest in the Alliance's inability to adapt its strategy to the re-emerging salience of the concept of deterrence, and by extension resilience, in the European security environment after the Russian annexation of Crimea.

Interim Conclusions

Current NATO public definitions of deterrence are very carefully constructed but deliberately ambiguous in order to accommodate differing national interpretations of how, for example, deterrence works, and what it means in strategic, not policy, terms.

Public policy use of these ambiguous definitions enables communication of ostensibly coherent public policy in deterrence. It also, however, has the potential to create serious tensions in the internal development and implementation of strategies which should provide the unambiguous 'fundamental principles' on which Alliance (and National) operations are planned and conducted.

Acculturation of the Core Concepts of European Security

This ‘gap’ undermines the psychology of deterrence. This makes it vital to re-articulate and acculturate the concept and its application across both doctrine and policy.

When applied in practice, these differences appear to curtail the Alliance ability to interpret and adapt political statements about deterrence and resilience into strategy. This inhibits the Alliance ability to conduct a strategy of deterrence in a coherent and meaningful way prior to identification of a crisis, and significantly inhibits the ability to integrate all deterrence messaging elements once a crisis has been recognised.

The Alliance needs to address shortcomings of both articulation and acculturation in order to enhance its strategic messaging of resolve and resilience quietly and consistently to deter an increasingly assertive Russia, or other adversary. This does not require escalatory brinkmanship, but it does demand a more considered and coherent linkage between the various deterrence messaging tools available to the Alliance leadership and translated to its national membership.

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